



The Lutheran Church of Vestavia Hills  
**SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE SUNDAY**  
January 28, 2024



## THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF VESTAVIA HILLS

201 So. Montgomery Highway Birmingham, Alabama 35216  
Church office: 205-823-1883 PreSchool/MDO: 205-791-5200  
Web Site: [www.vestavialutheran.org](http://www.vestavialutheran.org)  
WORSHIP: 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Sundays  
SUNDAY SCHOOL: 9:15 a.m.  
Church Office Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday



PASTOR: The Reverend Michael D. Ahlemeyer – [pastor@vestavialutheran.org](mailto:pastor@vestavialutheran.org) text: 205-201-8866  
PASTOR EMERITUS: The Reverend Clifford Hellmers – [vestluth@juno.com](mailto:vestluth@juno.com)  
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BOOK KEEPER: Melanie Goodson - [bookkeeper@vestavialutheran.org](mailto:bookkeeper@vestavialutheran.org)  
ADOPTED MEDICAL MISSIONARIES - Arianna and David Shirk, Madeline & Annabelle - [shirkdavid@gmail.com](mailto:shirkdavid@gmail.com)



TO OUR GUESTS: We offer you a warm welcome in the name of Jesus. Please sign the Friendship Register. If you do not have a church home, we would be delighted to have you become a part of our church family. Please feel free to speak with the Pastor about membership in our congregation. If you do have a church home, we pray that God will bless you as you continue your growth in faith and love.



SUNDAY SCHOOL Adult Bible Classes meets in the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall at 9:15 a.m. Children, Confirmation, and Youth classes also meet at 9:15 a.m. in the class rooms downstairs.



CHILDREN'S CHURCH and NURSERY Following the Children's Message, all children ages 3-7 are invited to Children's Church downstairs. They will return to the sanctuary after the sermon. A nursery attendant is provided for children ages birth to 3 years during our 8:00 AM and 10:30 AM services.



COMMUNION We invite all baptized Christians who acknowledge their sinfulness, trust in Christ as their Savior, and who recognize the real presence of Christ's Body and Blood in the bread and wine to join us at the Communion table. The practice of our congregation is to place the bread into the extended hand of the communicant. The wine is offered in individual cups; please take one from the tray as it is offered by the Elder. The common cup will be offered to those who do not take an individual cup. The cups in the center of the tray are filled with non-alcoholic wine, in consideration of persons who should not drink wine. Also, children who have not received Communion instruction are invited to come to the Communion rail, fold their hands and receive a blessing. Please notify an usher if you need a communion assistant to bring the Lord's Supper to you in the pew.

# PRELUDE

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### OPENING HYMN

"Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"

LSB #790 (v. 1-3,5)



1 Praise to the Lord, the Al - might - y, the King of cre -  
2 Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things is won - drous - ly  
3 Praise to the Lord, who has fear - ful - ly, won - drous - ly,



a - tion! O my soul, praise Him, for He is your  
reign - ing And, as on wings of an ea - gle, up -  
made you, Health has be - stowed and, when heed - less - ly



health and sal - va - tion! Let all who hear Now to His  
lift - ing, sus - tain - ing. Have you not seen All that is  
fall - ing, has stayed you. What need or grief Ev - er has



tem - ple draw near, Join - ing in glad ad - o - ra - tion!  
need - ful has been Sent by His gra - cious or - dain - ing?  
failed of re - lief? Wings of His mer - cy did shade you.

- 5 Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore Him!  
All that has life and breath, come now with praises before Him!  
Let the Amen  
Sound from His people again;  
Gladly forever adore Him!

## INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

**But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

**Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## PSALMODY

*~verses from Psalm 82 & 2 Corinthians 1*

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,

**Who comforts us in our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction.**

Move us to defend the poor and fatherless;

**move us to do justice to the afflicted and needy.**

For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings,

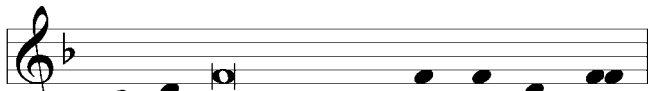
**so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too.**

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,

**Who comforts us in our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction.**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

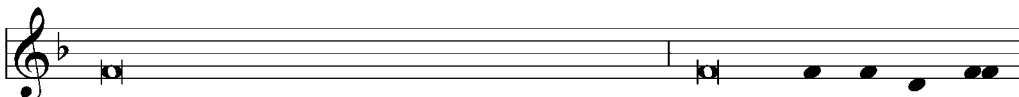
# KYRIE



**A** In peace let us pray to the Lord.



**C** Lord, have mer - cy.



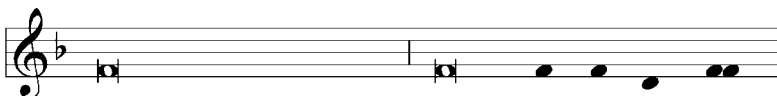
**A** For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.



**C** Lord, have mer - cy.



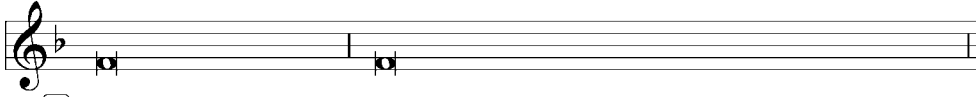
**A** For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.



**C** Lord, have mer - cy.



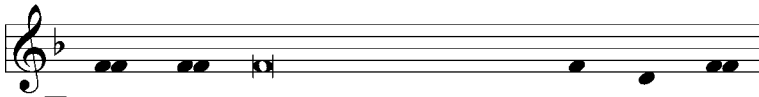
**A** For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise



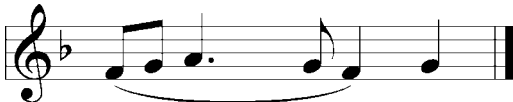
let us pray to the Lord.



**C** Lord, have mer - cy.



**A** Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord.



**C** A - men.

HYMN OF PRAISE

"This is the Feast"

*Refrain*

**C** This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

1 — Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose  
 2 Pow - er, rich - es, wis - dom, and strength, and  
 3 Sing with all the peo - ple of God, and  
 4 Bless - ing, hon - or, glo - ry, and might be to  
 5 For the Lamb who was slain has be -

blood set us free to be peo - ple of God. *Refrain*  
 hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are His. *Refrain*  
 join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: *Stanza 4*  
 God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men. *Refrain*  
 gun His reign. Al - le - lu - ia. *Final Refrain*

*Final Refrain*

This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, Who created us in the womb and sustains us through all of life. Give us the strength and courage to stand up for the defenseless and help those in need, whoever they may be. Through Jesus Christ Your Son and our Lord,



## OLD TESTAMENT READING

Deuteronomy 24:17-22

*(The Lord's Love for Vulnerable People)*

<sup>17</sup>"You shall not pervert the justice due to the sojourner or to the fatherless, or take a widow's garment in pledge, <sup>18</sup>but you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt and the LORD your God redeemed you from there; therefore I command you to do this.

<sup>19</sup>"When you reap your harvest in your field and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it. It shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.

<sup>20</sup>When you beat your olive trees, you shall not go over them again. It shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow. <sup>21</sup>When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not strip it afterward. It shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow. <sup>22</sup>You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I command you to do this.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## EPISTLE READING

Galatians 3:27-29

*(All Life Sacred in God's Eyes)*

<sup>27</sup>For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. <sup>28</sup>There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. <sup>29</sup>And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## ALLELUIA VERSE

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

## HOLY GOSPEL

Mark 2:1-12

The Holy Gospel according to Saint Mark, the second chapter.

Glo - ry to You, O Lord.

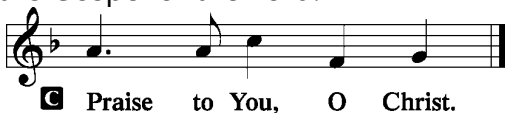
*(Jesus Heals Body and Soul of a Paralytic)*

<sup>1</sup>And when [Jesus] returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home.

<sup>2</sup>And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. <sup>3</sup>And they came, bringing to

him a paralytic carried by four men. <sup>4</sup>And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. <sup>5</sup>And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "My son, your sins are forgiven." <sup>6</sup>Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, <sup>7</sup>"Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" <sup>8</sup>And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question these things in your hearts? <sup>9</sup>Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed and walk'? <sup>10</sup>But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the paralytic— <sup>11</sup>"I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home." <sup>12</sup>And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

This is the Gospel of the Lord.



## APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life ✠ everlasting. Amen.**

## CHILDREN'S SERMON

### HYMN OF THE DAY

"Lord, Whose Love through Humble Service"

LSB #848 (v. 1,3-4)



1 Lord, whose love through hum - ble ser - vice Bore the weight of  
3 As we wor - ship, grant us vi - sion, Till Your love's re -  
4 Called by wor - ship to Your ser - vice, Forth in Your dear



hu - man need, Who up - on the cross, for - sak - en,  
veal - ing light In its height and depth and great - ness,  
name we go, To the child, the youth, the a - ged,



Of - fered mer - cy's per - fect deed, We, Your ser - vants, bring the  
Dawns up - on our quick - ened sight, Mak - ing known the needs and  
Love in liv - ing deeds to show; Hope and health, good - will and



wor - ship Not of voice a - lone, but heart, Con - se -  
bur - dens Your com - pas - sion bids us bear, Stir - ring  
com - fort, Coun - sel, aid, and peace we give, That Your



crat - ing to Your pur - pose Ev - 'ry gift that You im - part.  
us to tire - less striv - ing, Your a - bun - dant life to share.  
ser - vants, Lord, in free - dom May Your mer - cy know and live.

## SERMON

*"Valuing the Value-less"*

**Mark 2:1-12**

Vicar Matthew Vathauer

## OFFERING

*~please sign the Record of Fellowship during the Offering*

## VOLUNTARY

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Lord in Your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

## LORD'S PRAYER

## SANCTUS



**C** Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:



Heav-en and earth are full of Your glo - ry. Ho - san-na. Ho -



san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He who

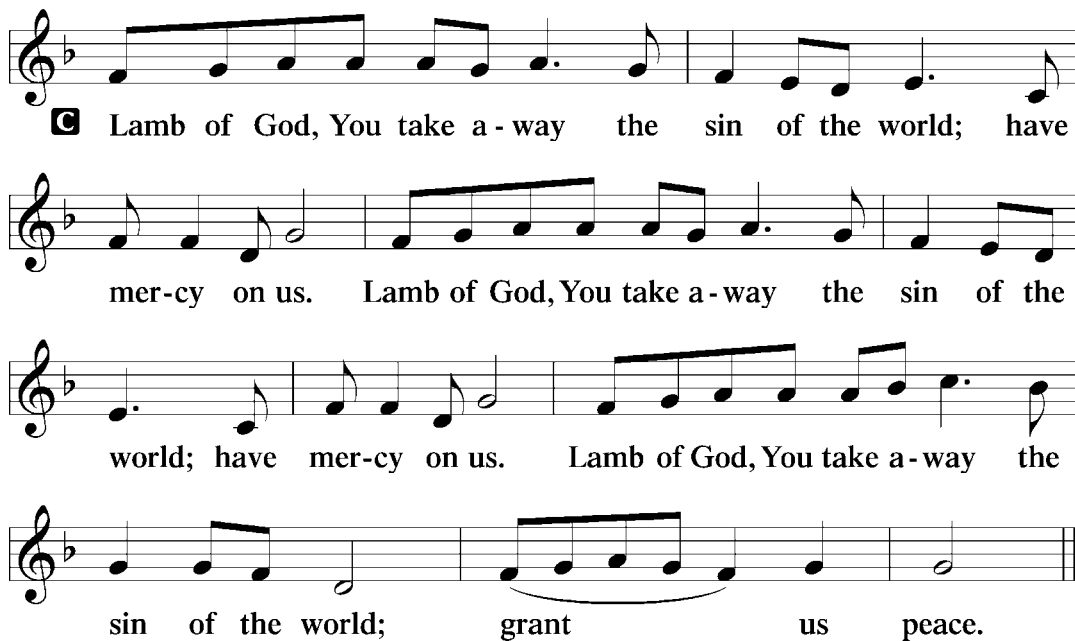


comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high - est.

# WORDS OF INSTITUTION

## THE PEACE

### AGNUS DEI



☐ Lamb of God, You take a - way the sin of the world; have  
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a - way the sin of the  
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a - way the  
sin of the world; grant us peace.

*~please be seated for the Distribution~*

## DISTRIBUTION

## DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

### "Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us"

LSB #851



1 Lord of glo - ry, You have bought us With Your  
 2 Grant us hearts, dear Lord, to give You Glad - ly,  
 3 Won - drous hon - or You have giv - en To our  
 4 Lord of glo - ry, You have bought us With Your



life - blood as the price, Nev - er grudg - ing for the  
 free - ly of Your own. With the sun - shine of Your  
 hum - blest char - i - ty In Your own mys - te - rious  
 life - blood as the price, Nev - er grudg - ing for the



lost ones That tre - men - dous sac - ri - fice;  
 good - ness Melt our thank - less hearts of stone  
 sen - tence, "You have done it all to Me."  
 lost ones That tre - men - dous sac - ri - fice.



And with that have free - ly giv - en Bless - ings  
 Till our cold and self - ish na - tures, Warmed by  
 Can it be, O gra - cious Mas - ter, That You  
 Give us faith to trust You bold - ly, Hope, to



count - less as the sand To the un - thank - ful  
 You, at length be - lieve That more hap - py  
 deign for alms to sue, Say - ing by Your  
 stay our souls on You; But, oh, best of



and the e - vil With Your own un - spar - ing hand.  
 and more bless - ed 'Tis to give than to re - ceive.  
 poor and need - y, "Give as I have giv'n to you"?  
 all Your grac - es, With Your love our love re - new.

"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

LSB #809



1 Great is Thy faith - ful - ness, O God my Fa - ther;  
2 Sum - mer and win - ter and spring - time and har - vest,  
3 Par - don for sin and a peace that en - dur - eth,



There is no shad - ow of turn - ing with Thee.  
Sun, moon, and stars in their cours - es a - bove  
Thine own dear pres - ence to cheer and to guide;



Thou chang - est not: Thy com - pas - sions, they fail not;  
Join with all na - ture in man - i - fold wit - ness  
Strength for to - day and bright hope for to - mor - row,



As Thou hast been, Thou for - ev - er wilt be.  
To Thy great faith - ful - ness, mer - cy, and love.  
Bless - ings all mine, with ten thou - sand be - side!



*Refrain*  
Great is Thy faith - ful - ness! Great is Thy faith - ful - ness!



Morn - ing by morn - ing new mer - cies I see;



All I have need - ed Thy hand hath pro - vid - ed;



Great is Thy faith - ful - ness, Lord, un - to me!



"Son of God, Eternal Savior"

LSB #842



1 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, Source of life and  
2 As You, Lord, have lived for oth - ers, So may we for  
3 Come, O Christ, and reign a - mong us, King of love and  
4 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, Source of life and



truth and grace, Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us  
oth - ers live. Free - ly have Your gifts been grant - ed;  
Prince of Peace; Hush the storm of strife and pas - sion,  
truth and grace, Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us



Hal - lows all our hu - man race, You our Head, who, throned in  
Free-ly may Your ser - vants give. Yours the gold and Yours the  
Bid its cru - el dis - cords cease. By Your pa - tient years of  
Hal - lows all our hu - man race: By Your pray - ing, by Your



glo - ry, For Your own will ev - er plead: Fill us with Your  
sil - ver, Yours the wealth of land and sea; We but stew - ards  
toil - ing, By Your si - lent hours of pain, Quench our fe - vered  
will - ing That Your peo - ple should be one, Grant, O grant our



love and pit - y, Heal our wrongs, and help our need.  
of Your boun - ty Held in sol - emn trust will be.  
thirst of plea - sure, Stem our self - ish greed of gain.  
hope's fru - i - tion: Here on earth Your will be done.

## **POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

O God the Father, the fountain and source of all goodness, who in loving-kindness sent Your only-begotten Son into the flesh, we thank You that for His sake You have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament, and we ask You not to forsake Your children but always to rule our hearts and minds by Your Holy Spirit that we may be enabled constantly to serve You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **BENEDICTION**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

**Amen.**

## CLOSING HYMN

"God of Grace and God of Glory"

LSB #850 (v. 1-2,4)



1 God of grace and God of glo - ry, On Your peo - ple  
2 Lo, the hosts of e - vil round us Scorn the Christ, as -  
4 Save us from weak res - ig - na - tion To the e - vils



pour Your pow'r; Crown Your an - cient Church's sto - ry;  
sail His ways! From the fears that long have bound us  
we de - plore; Let the gift of Your sal - va - tion



Bring its bud to glo - rious flow'r. Grant us wis - dom,  
Free our hearts to faith and praise. Grant us wis - dom,  
Be our glo - ry ev - er - more. Grant us wis - dom,



grant us cour - age For the fac - ing of this  
grant us cour - age For the liv - ing of these  
grant us cour - age, Serv - ing You whom we a -



hour, For the fac - ing of this hour.  
days, For the liv - ing of these days.  
dore, Serv - ing You whom we a - dore.

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## POSTLUDE